



**Request for City Council Committee Action
From the City Attorney's Office
and the Fire Department**

Date: June 12, 2002
To: Public Safety & Regulatory Services Committee

Subject: Fire Code Enforcement Plan Update

Recommendation: That the Committee receive and file the update

Prepared by: Rocco S. Forte', Fire Chief (673-2536)
Burt T. Osborne, Assistant City Attorney (673-2067)

Approved by: _____
Jay M. Heffern _____
City Attorney Rocco Forte'
Fire Chief

Presenter in Committee: Rocco S. Forte'
Burt T. Osborne

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

- ☒ No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget at this time.
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- ☐ Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- ☐ Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- ☐ Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- ☐ Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- ☐ Other financial impact (Explain):
- ☐ Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Background/Supporting Information:

In June of 2001, the PS&RS Committee adopted the Uniform Fire Code enforcement plan, as presented by the Minneapolis Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau. Based on the aging commercial structures in the City of Minneapolis, changed uses and occupancies in many commercial properties, and the increase in the use of hazardous substances and other dangerous activities, the Fire Department believes that a systematic approach to the enforcement of the fire code is needed.

The elements of the adopted enforcement plan include ongoing review of the Uniform Fire Code and changes as necessary, the development of a list of priority properties to determine enforcement strategies, yearly inspections of all hazardous materials facilities in the City, aggressive enforcement of the Uniform Fire Code by the Fire Prevention Bureau, and a quarterly report to this Committee.

The following is the May 2002 quarterly report to this Committee on the implementation of the fire code enforcement plan:

1. Fire Lane Ordinance

The new fire lane ordinance provides for designated and unobstructed fire lanes on private and public property anywhere in the City of Minneapolis. The recently enacted ordinance has led to freer and more secure and dependable access to all areas of the City that fire and rescue crews will need to respond.

In conjunction with the police department, and enforcement system, including a system of written violations and towing, is being developed and implemented.

2. Permits for the Storage Use and Handling of Hazardous Substances

In 2001, the City Council enacted a new ordinance regulating the storage, use and handling of hazardous materials in the City of Minneapolis. The Fire Department and the Fire Prevention Bureau requested the ordinance based on the aging structures in the City that are utilizing hazardous substances as part of their business. The new ordinance requires that all businesses in the City that engage in the target activities be inspected no less than annually to ensure ongoing safety.

As of May 30, 2002, 377 of the approximately 1100 affected properties had been inspected pursuant to the new ordinance, and over \$70,000 in permit fees have been collected. Even though the Fire Prevention Bureau lacks adequate software to have a completely automated billing system, staff has developed a billing system that is functioning well.

3. Pending Fire Code Compliance Actions

The attached pending fire code enforcement actions are the Fire Prevention Bureau's matters that have or will soon go to final order, and those matters that are currently pending in district court for prosecution. The attached cases, which are currently the Fire Prevention Bureau's top priorities, represent only a fraction of the pending matters in the fire prevention bureau.

In total, there are approximately 750 properties in the City of Minneapolis with outstanding orders to comply with the City's fire code. Fire Marshal Tom Deegan can be contacted for updates on any of the attached properties at 673-3270.